



**ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA  
MAYOR**

**February 29, 2012**

**The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.  
Governor of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

**Dear Governor Brown:**

I write to urge you to revise the portions of the teacher dismissal laws that make it difficult to dismiss teachers who violate the public trust of our families and students. Recent events in the Los Angeles Unified School District highlight the need to reevaluate state dismissal policies to ensure the safety of our students while simultaneously ensuring equal protection for all of our hard working, law abiding teachers.

While state policies must protect the many educators who are doing great work, they must not become obstacles that hinder the immediate termination of employees who engage in criminal behavior and harm children.

The process to remove a teacher - even one who is accused of abuse - is so onerous that in the case at Miramonte Elementary in the LAUSD a teacher was paid \$40,000 to leave the profession and on average dismissal proceedings cost the district \$300,000. While it is the district's responsibility to follow the law to remove a teacher, it is the state's duty to ensure that the process is not so irrational and arduous that districts are forced to make these kinds of decisions, which encourage resignation as opposed to dismissal.

Moving to dismiss a teacher triggers what can be more than a twelve-step process, often lasting several years. This can be mitigated by giving school boards more authority to dismiss teachers when the situation warrants this. Additionally, the process itself can be streamlined by shortening the length of time between appeals, limiting right to appeals, and/or leaving the final dismissal decision up to an administrative judge.

Further, teachers that engage in misconduct or criminal behavior should NOT be rewarded with full benefits and pensions.

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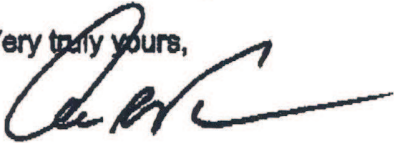
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As community leaders, it is our utmost duty to ensure sound laws that protect our children and enable parents to have confidence that their kids will be safe at school, while supporting and shielding our dedicated educators from unfair practices. I look forward to working with the LA delegation to put forth legislation on this issue.

Very truly yours,



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA  
Mayor

ARV:jr

cc: Senator Darrell Steinberg, Pro Tempore  
Assembly Member John Pérez, Speaker  
Senator Bob Huff, Minority Leader  
Assembly Member Connie Conway, Minority Leader